

Greeted by indigenous, Mocama-speaking Timucua Indians, Ribault and his crew entered the river, rowed ashore, and planted a column in honor of their King, Charles IX, claiming the land for France and marking a spot for future settlement. This French landing predates the settling of Jamestown by 45 years and occurred 58 years before the Mayflower arrived in Plymouth.

Two years later on June 22, 1564, a second sailing expedition, under the command of Rene Goulaine de Laudonniere, established the first French colony in the present-day United States of America near the mouth of the river. It was named la Caroline for the French King Charles IX. A fort was built in the colony or land of Charles to protect settlers. While there undoubtedly will be continued debate as to where and who claimed the first celebration of thanksgiving, we do know that the French Huguenots of the la Caroline colony celebrated a day of thanksgiving on June 30, 1564, and shared a meal with the Timucua Indians. Today, this landmark is operated by the United States National Park Service as Fort Caroline National Memorial.

Beginning with this first settlement and continuing until today, France and Florida have built a long-lasting relationship through consular representations, trade, cultural and educational exchanges, and tourism, all of which benefit both the French people and the people of Florida.

Florida has a long, rich maritime history dating back at least 12,000 years, but the documented history of the French coming to this long, flat peninsula is also cause for celebration. Many exciting activities are planned including the rededication of the Ribault Monument at Ft. Caroline National Memorial and the French Navy mooring two goelettes, the Etoile and the Belle Poule, in downtown Jacksonville. Consul General of France in Miami, Gaël de Maisonneuve, and other French and American dignitaries will be on hand for this historical celebration.

It is my honor to bring this historic commemoration to the attention of the United States Congress and to invite Members to join in the celebration.

ANGELICA PRADO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Angelica Prado for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Angelica Prado is a 12th grader at Jefferson Senior High and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Angelica Prado is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Angelica Prado for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedi-

cation and character in all her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, due to being unavoidably detained I was unable to cast the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall vote 132—I would have voted “yes,” rollcall vote 134—I would have voted “no,” rollcall vote 135—I would have voted “no,” rollcall vote 136—I would have voted “no,” rollcall vote 137—I would have voted “no,” rollcall vote 138—I would have voted “yes.”

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. XXX, expressing support for “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans’ Day 2012.”

We do not have to walk far from the doors of this building to be reminded of the bravery that so many of our young men and women have shown in defense of this country over the last 236 years. Statues, monuments, and other symbols of American freedom color our horizon and tell the stories of the veterans who served, sacrificed, and gave so much for the country they loved.

As a nation, we honor those who defend us with memorials, holidays, and parades. But, as a people, we have not always fulfilled our duty to properly recognize those fellow citizens who put themselves in harm’s way to keep us safe and protect our freedoms.

Unfortunately, we failed in this duty to our Vietnam veterans. They came home to a time of civil unrest and social turmoil—a time when opposition to the war too easily turned into opposition against those young men and women who served in that war.

Too many service members returned from the brutality of war, not recognized for their courage, their honor, and their sacrifice.

The harsh greeting that met too many veterans in addition to the life changing trials of war, made an already difficult transition to civilian life even harder.

The communities that could have supported those who were reeling from the trauma of loss were not always available. When these veterans needed someone to lend an ear, or a helping hand, too many found a cold shoulder.

By encouraging Americans to observe “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day,” my resolution seeks to provide these heroes the welcome home that they always deserved, but too many never received.

“Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day” is the culmination of years of effort on the part of my constituent Jose Ramos, himself a Vietnam veteran.

As an Army Combat Medic in Vietnam, Jose Ramos was victim to the indifferent and often hostile public reaction when he returned home. It was his personal experiences, and those of his fellow GIs, that motivated him to work toward establishing a national day of recognition. His work inspired many, including me, to help give Vietnam veterans their long overdue “welcome home.”

While today’s resolution may seem like a small gesture—and when compared to what our soldiers and their families sacrificed, it certainly is—it will serve to remind us of their service to our country.

Although there may be differing opinions on foreign policies and the popularity of certain military actions may vary, all American voices should rise in unison when it comes time to thank those who risk everything for the defense of the American people.

I urge my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to join in honoring Vietnam veterans by participating in Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day events in their communities next year.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARTIN HEINRICH

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, on the evening of March 26, 2012, I unfortunately missed rollcall votes 127, 128, and 129.

If I had been present, I would have voted in favor of rollcall vote 127, Representative STIVER’s (OH-15) bill, H.R. 2779.

If I had been present, I would have voted in favor of rollcall vote 128, Representative GRIMM’s (NY-13) H.R. 2682.

If I had been present, I would have voted in favor of rollcall vote 129, approval of the journal.

CANDIDATE VS. PRESIDENT ON OBAMACARE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, according to a recent CBS News article, when the President in 2008 was on the campaign trail, he blasted his primary opponent, Hillary Clinton, for supporting an individual mandate. Less than two years later, however, when the President lobbied the liberal-controlled Congress to pass the government healthcare takeover bill, he told legislators the individual mandate “was an essential part” of the takeover.

Almost every poll conducted across this country reveals the same result: an overwhelming number of Americans believe the individual mandate found in ObamaCare is unconstitutional and a chipping away of individual liberty. The Gadsden Flag of South Carolina is correct: Don’t Tread on Me.

The United States government should not require all of its citizens to buy insurance or push any other mandates that will limit freedoms. It is past the time for our nation to support legislation for real healthcare reform as